

By Grattan Puxon

11/11/2010 - THE UK SUPREME COURT has handed down a judgement this week which restores Basildon's obligation to provide land for families it will render homeless should the council go ahead with an intended 17 million euro clearance operation against the Dale Farm Travellers' village.

Unhappily, Britain's Coalition Government still fully supports Communities secretary Eric Pickles and his demolition of home building targets and has pledged that within a year it will override the current Supreme Court stance through new legislation.

But at least the ruling gives pause for thought while Theresa May at the Home Office ponders an Essex police request for 12 million euro to cover the cost of policing the Dale Farm eviction, which the Chief Constable expects will meet determined opposition.

Religious leaders are now backing the Travellers' campaign to save their homes and maintain a traditional community-based life-style on land they own. Catholic and Anglican bishops, visiting Dale Farm this month, are united in their opposition to the break up of the village where almost every home maintains a holy shrine.

Bishop Thomas McMahon is quoted as saying: "Alongside the humanitarian concerns we have to ask if an extremely expensive operation to evict the Travellers is a good use of public money in these straitened times."

Meetings are taking place at Dale Farm and in London this weekend to further plans for the setting up of a support camp to thwart Basildon's Tory-led ethnic-cleansing policy. **Camp Constant** will provide human rights monitors and a non-violent human shield to protect small children, vulnerable, sick and elderly persons from the bullyboy methods of Constant & Co bailiffs, on contract with Basildon for three million euro.

"This company has reputation for burning Traveller properties and breaking all the safety rules," said Richard Sheridan, president of the Gypsy Council.
"We're ready for them if they come here to hurt our children."

Among those facing eviction is 70-year-old Mary Flynn, whose husband died last week. She is preparing to request a hearing by the Court of Appeal into Basildon's refusal to provide her with a secure place for her caravan instead of a council flat.

A Southend County Court judge ruled that Basildon had fulfilled its duty to Mrs Flynn as a homeless person by allocating her a flat. The judge refused to hear evidence that the council, which claims it has no land for caravan parks, has been offered hundreds of hectares by the Homes and Communities Agency for this specific purpose.

In another victory last week, a High Court judge ordered Basildon council to pay compensation to Traveller families whose personal details had been published by the council back in 2005 in breach of privacy laws. The council had previously ignored such awards requested by a government ombudsman.

JOIN DALE FARM CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES Saturday 13 November

10 am meet at Wickford Station (out of Liverpool Street on Southend Line)
with onward lift to Dale Farm for **Camp Constant** preparations.
For details email dale.farm@btinternet.com

2 pm at the *Freedom Bookshop*
Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street
London E17QX
Meeting and expo

--- On Thu, 11/11/10, Tom Lomax <tlomax@dglaw.co.uk> wrote:

From: Tom Lomax <tlomax@dglaw.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Margaret Sheridan (of 4 Camilla Drive)
To: "Dale Farm" <dale.farm@btinternet.com>